

OCTOBER 1950

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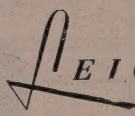


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(Incorporating PLAY PICTORIAL and THE AMATEUR STAGE)

Vol. XLVI

No. 309

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Edited by Frances Stephens

**October 1950**

THE London autumn theatre season has been heralded by several successful new productions, including *Accolade*, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, *Will Any Gentleman?* and *The Little Hut*. In addition another laughter making hit, *Reluctant Heroes*, the farce by Colin Morris, starring Dermot Walsh and Wally Patch, has gone to the Whitehall, where it bids fair to achieve the same popularity as *Worm's Eye View*. This play, which does for the army what its predecessor did for the air force, will be reviewed next month.

Also produced too late for review were *Journey's End* at the Gateway; *L'Enfant Prodiges* at the Mercury on 18th September; *The Mask and the Face*, Arts, 19th September and *Turn to Page Two*, Embassy, 27th.

Ruth Draper returned to London on 25th September for a season at the Criterion, and worthy of special note is that the Palladium has reverted to an all-British show with *Starlight Rendezvous*, starring that most British of comedians, Tommy Trinder.

On 26th September, the brilliant Arts Theatre revival of Somerset Maugham's *Home And Beauty*, which is reviewed in this issue, transferred to the St. Martin's.

Big event at Covent Garden was the visit of La Scala Opera Company for a short season of twelve performances. Their reception was little short of rapturous, and special praise was given to the orchestra, which had just previously taken part in the Edinburgh Festival. The critics' only—rather mild—complaint was that the standard of production—i.e. decor and costumes, fell considerably short of that reached by the Covent Garden Opera Company's usual productions

**Over the Footlights**

at the Opera House. No doubt there is a different tradition in this matter in Italy, and the greater emphasis on the quality of the singers and orchestra had its just reward.

At Sadler's Wells Theatre on 18th September the season opened with an excellent production of *Faust*, in which soprano Amy Shuard gained fresh laurels for her most sympathetic rendering of the part of Marguerite. Rowland Jones was the Faust and Hervey Alan a towering and menacing Mephistopheles. Producer Dennis Arundell has introduced some effective touches, which do not detract from Gounod's music, and the ballet by Pauline Grant in Act III is most impressive. Joseph Carl's decor is another striking ingredient of a most popular revival. Two days later the Sadler's Wells Ballet Company gave the first performance of Balanchine's *Trumpet Concerto*.

During October a revival of *The Old Ladies* will be seen at the Lyric, Hammer-smith, and *The Fourposter*, a two-character play, with Dulcie Gray and Michael Denison, comes to the Ambassadors on the 12th.

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# New Shows of the Month

"Sayonara"—New Lindsey, 15th August.  
 "Rosmersholm"—St. Martin's, 22nd August.  
 "The Little Hut"—Lyric, 23rd August.  
 "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray"—Haymarket, 29th August.  
 "View Over The Park"—Lyric, Hammer-smith, 30th August.  
 "Home And Beauty"—Arts, 31st August.  
 "Spring Song"—Saville, 4th September.  
 "Soldier Boy"—Embassy, 5th September.  
 "Will Any Gentleman?"—Strand, 6th Sept.  
 "Accolade"—Aldwych, 7th September.  
 "Lovely, Lovely Money"—New Lindsey, 11th September.

## "Sayonara"

SAYONARA is the bitter fruit of its author's experience in a Japanese prison camp, where Mr. Kenneth Attiwill spent 3½ years and wrote his play. As a demonstration of how prisoners of war suffered at the hands of the Japanese, it is deeply moving, harrowing, a moral medicine. But this, however necessary and good for us, does not quite make a play. The agony and death of an English officer, tortured by his anxiety about his wife in England no less than by his captors, are strenuously but not quite convincingly presented. Peter Madren, again compelled to be fearfully tense, plays this unfortunate young man. There is very good acting by all the company. Denis O'Dea is a medical officer always at the end of his patience. Hector Macgregor presents always a picture of patient sanity and one cannot but be grateful for the contrast. The Japanese, speaking no English, seem more credible than the British; Richard Davies is particularly good. There is skilful direction by Thomas Muschamp, who also sustains the part of a mentally enfeebled sufferer in captivity.

H.G.M.

## "Rosmersholm"

THIS work is the perfect example of Ibsen's outstanding skill in construction of a retrospective play. "Come, let us pore over the past," he says, as he holds us with his glittering eye, and his characters proceed to acquaint us with deeds and dark sayings from an earlier time that we never would believe if we had only our own senses to guide us. Not only this habit of beginning a play when all is over save the inquest and a suicide to round it off, but also the weight and quality of his people enforce credence. Ibsen at this time expressed a belief in an aristocracy of character, of will, of mind, and many of his creatures escape impatient

censure, because, however crass their conduct and prosy their Socratic speeches, they do indubitably belong to this aristocracy. The meanest has a certain grandeur, if only that of a slow-moving, ponderous, cold-blooded mammoth, and we watch and listen fascinated, over-awed and crushed.

Sometimes it is argued that we take Ibsen too seriously. In *Rosmersholm*, as in Chekhov, we are concerned with the decay of the old order, doomed no doubt even if Rebecca West had stayed in Finmark. She however, acts as the new wine too potent for old bottles and we see the end of the House of Rosmer. Wittingly, she had terminated one life and planned to contrive another. It is difficult, surely, to take Rebecca too seriously. Yet, Signe Hasso, who should understand Ibsen best, being herself Norwegian, seemed the lightest weight in the admirable cast in Michael Macowan's production. Her Rebecca was polished and beautiful but her strength seemed a matter of manners and habit rather than of character, cultivated not innate. It is better, perhaps, not to have had ideals than to lose them. Such a creature as the ex-parson, John Rosmer, becomes just a lay figure for Ibsen to demonstrate upon. Robert Harris made him something more than that. Serious, simple, earnest and perplexed, he held our sympathy throughout. Edward Chapman was a powerful Kroll, heavy and humourless, yet with his stolid surface never really still but always showing subtle changes that absorbed attention.

The two incursions of Ulric Brendel were so dramatic that something of eccentricity in the character was needed to carry them off, but George Coulouris seemed at times too obviously unstable to be trusted even to Rosmer, too fantastic to be acceptable as a real person. John Kidd was just sufficient raffish as the crafty Mortensgaard. As Mr. Helseth, who has to deal with all these odd people and get on with her work, Nora Nicholson made certain our acceptance of them and of their final tragedy.

H.G.M.

## "The Little Hut"

THE theme of this light comedy from the French of Andre Roussin is very simple and undoubtedly very Gallic. So much so that it would have seemed more natural to keep the characters against their French background. However, Nancy Mitford, who has adapted the play with considerable wit, no doubt felt that English characters would afford the opportunity for easier topical humour, especially as the slender them-





**"The Little Hut"  
at the  
Apollo**

An amusing scene from Act 2 of Peter Brook's production of *The Little Hut*, which was adapted from the French of Andre Roussin by Nancy Mitford. The picture shows (*l. to r.*) Geoffrey Toone as the Stranger, Robert Morley as Philip and Joan Tetzel as Susan. The engaging desert island decor is by Oliver Messel.  
(Picture by Angus McBean)

obviously required a fair amount of padding.

We are thus presented with three English characters; Philip, a financier, given to making trips to Liverpool, Susan, his wife, and Henry, his best friend, who, we quickly discover, has been Susan's lover for some six years before the play begins. These three are shipwrecked in evening dress while on a pleasure cruise and during their stay on a desert island their relationships become adapted to their changed environment. Since there are no longer any trips to the office or Liverpool, Susan's love affair with Henry is shorn of its possibilities, until Henry himself insists on telling Philip the truth and making a proper fifty-fifty arrangement, in which the little hut and the big hut have important roles. With a satiric twist, after recovering from his first shock, the husband finds new zest in life in the new situation, whereas it is the lover who behaves like any outraged suburban husband. Susan, a fascinating creature, takes all this in her stride and, wanton that she is, falls heavily for the supposed "native chief" when he arrives on the scene, and in a noble gesture to "save" her husband and lover goes to the hut with him with undue alacrity. However,

the magnificent savage was not all he seemed to be, and in the end it is Philip who emerges most unscathed and definitely triumphant.

The joke is inclined to wear a little thin, but there is always Oliver Messel's delectable desert island, with its outsize flowers and fruits and brightest of colours to hold the attention. Robert Morley, who was last seen in London in *Edward, My Son*, though in some ways miscast as the husband, extracts every ounce of satirical humour out of the situation, while Joan Tetzel, an American actress of considerable personality, makes of Susan an irresistible light-of-love. David Tomlinson scores as the lover who becomes so dreadfully respectable as the play wears on, and Geoffrey Toone looks truly magnificent as the pseudo native chief. Considerable praise is due to Peter Brook for his imaginative production of this sophisticated piece of nonsense. F.S.

**"The Second Mrs. Tanqueray"**

PINERO'S classic story of a fascinatingly impossible woman is given a magnificent revival at the Haymarket with Cecil Beaton's luxurious decor and costumes to underline



an age that has passed away. If many of the sentiments expressed are now quite foreign to our present day outlook, there can be no denying the skill of the playwright, and the play remains an excellent piece of "theatre," even enthralling in many parts.

Paula Tanqueray, the woman of easy virtue, who thought she had found social status by marrying a wealthy, good and highly respected man, is proved to be her own worst enemy in a series of disasters that finally lead to suicide. She is a perverse creature, yet showing streaks of nobility. Eileen Herlie brought considerable understanding to the part and a real sense of this woman's fundamental unhappiness. In looks, movement and in the "grand manner" Miss Herlie is undoubtedly one of the few present-day actresses who could present the role with any sense of conviction. We will not easily forget her soliloquy with the mirror shortly before her suicide, and the poignant picture she presented of a woman without a future, growing old before our eyes. Leslie Banks played the much bewildered Aubrey Tanqueray, her husband, with commendable restraint, and Ronald Ward in the plum part of Cayley Drummle made much of the humour and yet glossed over this character's slight inconsistencies with skill. In the other important role of Ellean, Aubrey Tanqueray's young daughter by his first wife, for whom Paula forms a strangely passionate attachment, an unknown young actress, Josephine Griffin, made a deep impression. Also true to type was Marie Ney's Mrs. Cortelyou, and Robert Urquhart was convincing in his brief appearance as the young man who wished to marry Ellean, only to be confronted by Paula, his ex-mistress. The producer was Murray Macdonald. F.S.

### "View Over The Park"

ONE of Ibsen's favourite themes, an ambitious man's preference for a powerful position in the world to a woman's love, is the core of C. P. Snow's first play. Sir Philip Hayes is not such an impressive figure as Borkman and the whole affair seems rather unnecessary and forced, but we are given a view of the set-up of a Health Commission intriguing because presented by a Civil Service Commissioner. The characters are voluble but they seem to talk mainly from the face.

The love which Sir Philip relinquishes has existed between him and the wife of a former protégé of his, who is now an uncomfortably recalcitrant member of the Commission which Sir Philip, as its dynamic Secretary, attempts to drive and over-ride. The lady is also his secretary, which makes the play compact if less plausible.

For Sir Philip's ability, like his love, we have to take the author's word, but John

McCallum, as well as giving him a pleasant exterior, conveyed an impression of hidden reserves. As his secretary, whom he thinks he loves, Mary Kerridge showed always the strain an actress must feel when trying to do full justice to a novelist's lines; especially when on a subject he and she have reason to fear the audience may not regard as of special rarity and deep significance. Catherine Lacey was deliciously cool in the character of Lady Hayes, whose coolness as a wronged wife was itself beyond belief. George Hayes ran a luscious course of pomp and clarity as the Chairman of the Commission, and George Howe worked a thin vein of comedy with skill and vigour. Norman Marshall directed. H.G.M.

### "Home And Beauty"

THE welcome revival of W. Somerset Maugham's 1919 farce gives much pleasure. Its rather exaggerated indication of post-war privations seems more apt to the present day than to the time of its writing. The cynically light-hearted treatment of the Enoch Arden theme shows Mr. Maugham in his best vein of caddish humour, all the laughs being at the expense of women. The last laugh, however, falls to Victoria, "a dear little thing," cleverly played by Brenda Bruce, who shakes free of two husbands who were trying to shake free of her and allies herself to a wangler in a big way with the prospect of a peerage.

The two husbands are played on the best Tweedledum and Tweedledee lines by Hugh Burden and Anthony Marlowe. One of the most amusing scenes owes its success to Brian Oulton's acid sweet solicitor and Barbara Leake's priceless study of a professional lady intervener. May Hallatt provides a sober demonstration of the importance of domestic cook. Production is by Roy Riccio with three excellent settings by Fanny Taylor. H.G.M.

### "Spring Song"

*SPRING Song* by Bella and Samuel Spewack is a very sad, very homely story patiently and realistically told by an all Jewish company of impressive competence. It depicts the tragedy of a young girl, light-ardent, incautious and ripe for love, who tempts her sister's lover in an idle hour and becomes the mother of his child. Her mother, mainly for religion and honour, enforces a marriage between these two, who now have only aversion for each other. The girl dies when her baby is born, having a will to live.

In the part of the girl, Yvonne Mitchell uses a pair of expressive eyes and a voice of unusual range and flexibility to give us a complete understanding of the nature

(Continued on page 8)





(Picture by Angus McBean)

## Emlyn Williams and Diana Churchill in "Accolade"

Mr. Emlyn Williams returned to the West End after a long absence to appear in his own play, *Accolade*, a highly dramatic work which has created a deep impression, and which is reviewed fully elsewhere in this issue. In the picture above he is seen as Will Trenting, a successful novelist who leads a Jekyll and Hyde existence, and with him is Diana Churchill as his wife, Rona. Mr. Williams' last appearance was in his own play, *Trespass*, at the Globe in 1947, while Miss Churchill was last seen delighting Old Vic audiences at the New Theatre this year. *Accolade*, which is certain to achieve a long run at the Aldwych, is directed by Glen Byam Shaw, and the cast also includes Ruth Dunning, Noel Willman and Dora Bryan.



## New Shows of the Month (Contd.)

Florrie Solomon and to make us feel sympathy for her. It is a performance of unusual quality. Lilly Molnar bestows much artistic warmth and tenderness upon the ignorant but devout Mrs. Solomon. Meier Tzelniker, who always impresses by his efficiency, plays an old and tried friend of the family and not a look, not a gesture, not an inflexion misses its mark. His daughter, Anna Tzelniker, most competent in her first English-speaking part, plays as the quiet, sober and dutiful sister who is one of the chief sufferers in this tragedy of Spring. Eveline Garratt contributes a clever character study as a fast and flighty but still safe girl, and Sidney Vivien makes a very natural and likeable old doctor. Production is by Robert Mitchell. This Jewish company succeed in making family life seem a warm, beautiful and holy thing. That is their triumph. Never does an intimacy appear embarrassing. H.G.M.

### "Soldier Boy"

THE development of a life saved by another's sacrifice arouses curiosity not often satisfied. One of low moral worth has an important part in Aubrey Dexter's play. He held a Captain's commission in the last war and he was rescued from death at Tobruk by one of his sergeants, who by this action was injured so that his mental grade was reduced to that of a boy of ten, and, five years later when the play begins, there it seems to be permanently pegged. Everything has been tried and only his mother still believes that Johnny Taylor may one day recover.

We have become familiar with the dreary monotony of life in this middle-class home, the unusual elements of which, a tiptling, shabby old uncle and a mentally abnormal son, only deepen the gloom, when the gallant captain unexpectedly turns up. He is, to us, noticeably bogus, but Mrs. Taylor thinks he may hold a key to Johnny's recovery and she makes much of him. The others have to adjust themselves to his addition as they may and it is of dramatic interest how they do. They are people we accept as real. Much of their talk is banal claptrap but appropriate to their characters and theatrically effective.

The situation with which the play ends comes about by the swift final release of an action implicit from the beginning. On reflection, it satisfies demands of artistic pattern and of poetic justice.

Beatrice Varley is natural in the role of the mother. Derek Blomfield hits the right notes and attitudes for a stage study of the son. His sprightly vigour and boyish enthusiasms make Johnny's lot seem a happy one, dimming the idea of affliction, but the truth

that must be allowed for is that a realistic study would be ugly indeed. One of life's interesting failures is perfectly played by the author. There is a clever study of a "normal" clerk by Richard Pearson. Clement McCallin plays the man of strange background and temperament who unscrupulously disturbs the domestic stagnation and pays in full. H.G.M.

### "Will Any Gentleman?"

VERNON Sylvaïne's latest farce looks like being one of the big comedy hits of the season. Indeed this prolific author of the funny play has written nothing better.

Robertson Hare and Arthur Riscoe as the brothers Henry and Charley Stirling prove themselves an irresistible comedy team in this story of a respectable bank cashier who celebrates his 50th birthday by going alone to a music hall where he is mesmerised by the great "Mendoza." Unfortunately, unknown to himself, the little man is a Jekyll



JEAN CADELL

who stars with Mary Jerrold and Mary Clare in the Company of Four's revival of *The Old Ladies*, Rodney Ackland's adaptation of Hugh Walpole's novel which, directed by Frith Banbury, opens for a season at the Lyric, Hammersmith, on 4th October. Miss Cadell and Miss Jerrold will both be seen in their original roles, and Miss Clare will be seen in the role originally created by Dame Edith Evans.

(Portrait by Alexander Bender)



**Right: JOSEPHINE GRIFFIN**

who has scored a considerable success in the role of Eileen in the revival of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* at the Haymarket Theatre, in which Eileen Herlie and Leslie Banks are the stars, with decor by Cecil Beaton.

(Portrait by Angus McBean)

and Hyde character. Under the influence, his lower nature comes uppermost and he knocks out the hypnotist and gets away from the theatre before the spell can be broken. Thereafter ensues a terrible time for his wife, for the Mr. Hyde and Don Juan part pops up frequently, and Henry steals £300 from his bank, with incredible complications before all his straightened out. Early in his predicament he had seft for his brother, Charley, who had always been a bad lad, and together they try to outwit the hypnotist, who sees the opportunity for a little blackmail and who, as a later gesture, mesmerises Charley into a most unnatural desire to be good.

Outstanding among the supporting company is Charles Groves as the doddering old doctor doing locum work who is called in to advise about Henry's mental condition, and Wilfred Boyle as the undertaker's mute who gets mesmerised at the same time as Henry into an irresistible desire to laugh when things are at their blackest. Constance Lorne as Henry's wife and Ruth Maitland as his formidable mother-in-law, are familiar Sylvaine figures, and Thelma Gregg and Pamela Deeming provide the glamour, with Natalie Raine as Beryl, the sex-starved maid-servant, who dotes on Mr. Hare in his Don Juan guise. Richard Bird directs. F.S.

**"Accolade"**

THIS is a strangely uneven play with many weaknesses, but the whole is such good theatre that much of the criticism one might be tempted to make seems unimportant. For although individually some of the characters are not altogether convincing, in a quite remarkable way Mr. Williams has created an atmosphere of tremendous sincerity. His story tells of Will Trenting, a famous author and Nobel prize winner, who writes novels about the seamy side of life which are so realistic that even his publisher recognises that he must have visited the lowest haunts to get his "copy." But only his wife knows that these visits satisfy an integral part of his nature and that he is a man with a split personality.

The day arrives when he is to be knighted for his literary achievements, an honour which he accepts only for his wife's sake. On the eve of his visit to Buckingham Palace a particularly loathsome type of blackmailer called Daker threatens to expose him for his



behaviour as "Bill Trent" with a fourteen-year-old girl at one of his notorious Rotherhithe parties. The girl, who Trenting had taken to be over twenty, is, the blackmailer alleges, his daughter, who is still at school. When Trenting is in the act of handing over the hush money Daker—an ex-Cambridge man and would-be author whom drink has dragged to the lowest depths—is suddenly overwhelmed by envy and decides to forego the money in order to ruin the novelist.

After a dramatic scene in which Trenting and his friends, including his publisher, who is also a lawyer, confront the blackmailer in a vain effort to dissuade him from calling in the police, Trenting—now Sir William—knowing that disgrace and a term of imprisonment lie ahead, decides to tell his young son as much of the truth as he can understand. This is one of the most moving scenes of the play.

Emlyn Williams himself plays the part of William Trenting, alias Bill Trent, with great conviction, and in many passages with a burning sincerity, so that though one is often puzzled by the strangeness of the man's character, ultimately one is made to sympathise. The same can be said of Diana Churchill's portrayal of Rona, his wife, also a perplexing character, for we learn that she was fully aware of her husband's grave weakness before she married him. It scarcely seems reasonable that so upright and loyal



a woman could link her life with such a man or rejoice that he was the father of her child. Some rich humour is supplied by John Stratton and Dora Bryan as Harold and Phyllis, the two loquacious East Enders who are the boon companions of Bill Trent's night life, and no praise could be too high for Noel Willman's Daker, a sinister creature of oily villainy, who impresses on his very first appearance. Anthony Oliver gives a neat portrayal of Albert, Will Trenting's valet-chauffeur-cum-secretary, who is a "wide boy" considerably reformed. Anthony Nicholls is impressive as the novelist's publisher who suffers various shocks at the revelation of his most lucrative author's character, but who remains loyal at the end. But not quite so convincing is Ruth Dunning as the woman friend who is not able to adjust her point of view. Finally, much is due to John Cavanah, the young actor who plays Ian, Trenting's schoolboy son. This is a performance of rare understanding which justly received tremendous applause.

Glen Byam Shaw directed with skill, and Michael Weight's setting illustrating admirably the prosperous study in Trenting's Regent's Park house, provides a wonderful contrast to that other room in Rotherhithe which we do not see, but can imagine only too well in all its sordidness, thanks to Emlyn Williams' brilliant writing. F.S.

## "Lovely, Lovely Money"

I SHOULD hate to endorse the advertisement which says that *Lovely, Lovely Money* may well be Miss Shirley Cocks' finest play. It contains many startling situations which might make a big scene in a quieter play but they are all laid on without sufficient preparation. We feel that it is done to make a smashing effect and we do not believe a word of it. We know the characters only as we might know strangers heard gossiping or quarrelling in a public place. All the women seem to belong to the same age group and only by listening carefully do we realise that some of them have a sad past and some a forbidding future. We drip out after the final curtain numbed by a series of feverish and tumultuous asseverations by at least seven different characters, among whom Vida Hope and Digby Wolfe and Marianne Deeming had been momentarily able, by a certain intensity, to give the screw an extra turn and wrench from us some admiration. Gratitude went to Anton Diffring, who was different, being quietly sincere as a servant.

The play was directed by Robert Henderson and Richard Lake met its needs with two Park Lane interiors. H.G.M.

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Left to right: PETER FINCH, RICHARD GOOLDEN, DIANA WYNYARD, JAMES DONALD and THOMAS HEATHCOTE in an amusing scene from the play.

## "Captain Carvallo"

**SCENES**  
**BY**  
**ANGUS**  
**McBEAN**

DENIS Cannan's delightfully witty comedy, which has been fully reviewed in a previous issue, was an immediate success when it opened at the St. James's Theatre on 9th August as the second production under Sir Laurence Olivier's management. Sir Laurence himself produced the play prior to his Hollywood visit, and the decor is by Tanya Moiseiwitsch. As we go to press news comes that *Captain Carvallo* will be moving to the Garrick on 9th October.





*Smilja:* You'd better stop guessing people's ages, until you're either experienced enough to guess right or wise enough to guess politely.

The opening scene in the kitchen of Caspar Darde's farmhouse. Smilja, Darde's wife who has been trying to subdue Anni (Jill Bennett), their insubordinate maidservant, is awaiting the return of her husband from an underground movement assignment.

*Anni:* It's so silly to talk of them "enemy soldiers." Some of them only come from forty miles to the east of us.

Professor Winke, a biologist by profession, is also working for the underground with Darde, and arrives unexpectedly at the farmhouse dressed in Caspar's clothes.





*Carvallo:* I think this part of the war's being rather fun, don't you?

*Gross:* For you it is. Since the last advance, one grocer's wife, one assistant matron, two school teachers and a waitress.

The debonair captain of the "enemy" forces, who are fighting over this disputed territory, arrives at the farmhouse with his batman, and demands to be billeted. Acting on instructions, the Professor pretends to be Smilja's husband.



*Carvallo:* Forgive me for saying so: but did you know that you have a grey hair?

*Smilja:* Nonsense. Where?

Carvallo loses no time in endeavouring to make a conquest of his attractive hostess, even though she has hitherto led the blameless life of a lay-preacher's respectable spouse.





*Winke:* Excuse me, have you got a cigarette?

Finding the Captain and Smilja in a compromising embrace, the Professor's reaction is scarcely that of an outraged husband.

*Winke:* The word "intimacy" has a special legal connotation which I cannot accept. I had my arm round Mrs. Darde's waist. That, in law, is familiarity, it might be assault, but it is not intimacy.

When a little later Caspar Darde had burst in on the scene (in Winke's clothes) and immediately hailed Smilja as his wife, naturally Carvalho's suspicions are aroused, and he holds an inquiry.



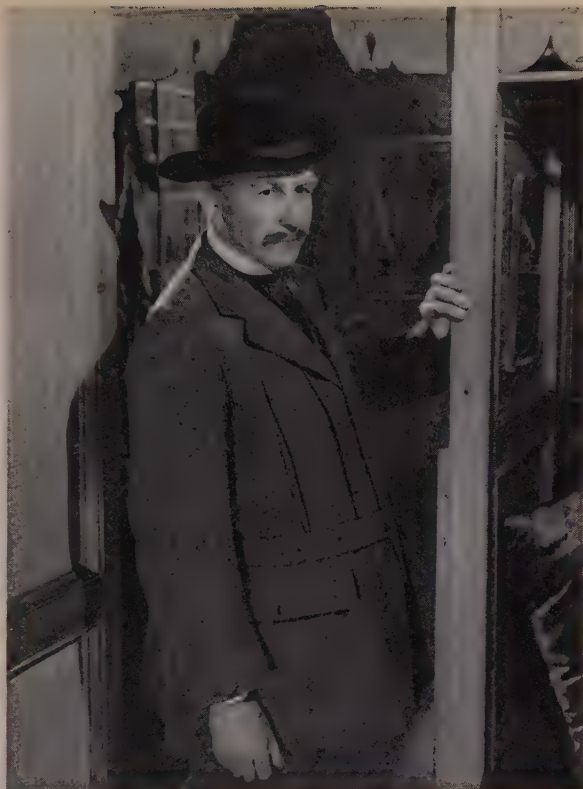


*Baron:* And don't forget, if it isn't done to my satisfaction, I'll damn well denounce you for collaboration. And you know what that means? Purge.

The Baron, bibulous leader of the local Resistance (Anthony Pelly) calls to instruct his subordinates to liquidate Captain Carvallo and his batman. Unhappily Darde and Winke rather like these two "enemy" intruders, and anyway Darde has hopes of saving the Captain's soul.

*Darde:* I beg your pardon. Though my principles do not allow me to partake of strong drink, I think they would allow my next one to be a very little stronger.

Darde and the Professor have hatched a plot whereby they will pretend to blow up the Captain while he is otherwise engaged, and the little lay preacher is even led to believe that the assignation Carvallo has with his wife for that night is all for the good.







*Darde:* Why do you keep requiring me to swallow two white pills?

*Winke:* They are a sedative, and you're suffering from shock.

The Captain had nearly discovered their plot when Darde was assembling the tins of dynamite, but a rapid decision to hold a prayer meeting on the spot had saved the situation (see page 11). Later, with Carvalho and his batman both otherwise engaged upstairs in the farmhouse, Darde has a misadventure while blowing up their billiard table outside.

*Gross:* Don't stand there looking down your nose at me. Apart from anything else, it isn't the sort of nose you can look down, 'cos it turns up at the end.

The next morning the Captain and his man, and Smilja and the maid, have heard nothing of the violent explosion. Meantime gunfire is heard and Gross makes an effort to contact headquarters.



*Gross:* I want to get into "civvies" and marry Anni.

*Carvallo:* Don't be ridiculous, Gross. You've never wanted to marry them before. What's come over you?

When Gross has discovered their ruined billet, he realises how easy it would be to be presumed dead and desert from the army and marry Anni. The Captain, though marvelling at his batman's sudden constancy, sees the point, and agrees to cover his tracks.



The battle moves nearer, and it is time for Captain Carvallo to take his leave. Never before had he been so sincerely attracted by a woman. It is easy, too, to see that this has been the great romance of Smilja's life. As she hands him the geranium he always carries into battle, they take a silent farewell of each other.





The impressive Tattoo, with the Castle floodlit in the background.

# The 1950 Edinburgh Festival

REVIEWED BY H. G. MATTHEWS

IN his Foreword to the programme, Sir Andrew Murray, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, states that the Festival's object is to further international understanding and goodwill. When the fourth Edinburgh International Festival of Music and Drama opened on Sunday afternoon, 20th August, with a Service of Praise in St. Giles' Cathedral, the Very Rev. Charles L. Warr, Dean of the Thistle, described the artist as an exponent of harmony in a world of discord. He may be. Certainly, nothing on the Festival's theatrical side is so realistic as to reflect a world divided into two hostile camps.

Military displays on the Castle Esplanade have been so popular in the past that this year stands to accommodate 5,000 spectators have been set up and a more than usually elaborate programme arranged. Among the events which appeal to both eye and ear, the Tattoo at the Castle ranks first. When it sets itself to give a show, the Army is unrivalled. Every night during the first week, 5,000 people sat in the rain, apparently happily absorbed watching a floodlit arena filled with Highland and Household Troops, with plumes and feathers, scarlet tunics and kilts, marching and dancing to the accompaniment of pipes and bands.

The man who has reason to reflect upon the Festival with peculiar satisfaction is Mr. John Christie, for the enterprise was largely Glyndebourne inspired and Glyndebourne

still leads. The most important theatrical work is the brilliant opera within a play known as *Ariadne auf Naxos*, which begins as a performance of Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* and so continues up to the point where Monsieur Jourdain entertains the Marquise Dorimène. Then, instead of the Turkish Ballet, there follows Hugo von Hofmannsthal's extraordinary opera on two planes, with music by Richard Strauss. Mr. Jourdain has lavishly ordered an opera with a classical theme and also a light comedy by Italian players. At the last moment, in dread lest no time be left for fireworks, he sends orders that both works be performed simultaneously! Had he been there to mark the reception of his order by the artists, he would have had his fireworks too. However, he is paying and they are forced to the places by the Music Master. What ensues is not the irreconcilable conflict of two worlds that might have been feared, for music blends them. The Italian comedians act as contrast and comment, whilst the ideal nature of Ariadne's grief is emphasised by their presence.

Ariadne, deserted on the rocky island of Naxos by Theseus, prays for Death. Harlequin and his company attempt to banish tragedy and cheer her up! Ariadne, of course, ignores them and Zerbinetta, dismissing her four male companions, essays argument. Unlike Ariadne, who loves once and

(Continued on page 20)



Scenes from the Edinburgh Festival plays. Above: A glimpse of James Bridie's *The Queen's Comedy*, with Sonia Dresdel and Walter Fitzgerald. Below: A dramatic moment from the Rev. John Home's *Douglas* with Sybil Thorndike and Lewis Casson. Bottom left: Alec Clunes, Ursula Jeans and Robert Eddison in *Bartholomew Fair*. Bottom right: Patricia Burke and Duncan Macrae in Linklater's *The Atom Doctor*.





## The 1950 Edinburgh Festival (Continued)

for always, Zerbinetta loves many for a while. The worthlessness of men is the subject of a wonderful coloratura Aria and the pleasures of flirtation are also extolled. Ariadne is driven by this to seek solitude in her cave and the Commedia dell'Arte quintet occupy the stage until Zerbinetta departs with Harlequin and the other three retire discomfited. Ariadne's nymphs then appear and prepare us for the arrival of Bacchus. When he comes, he is surprised by the nature of his reception, for Ariadne receives and embraces him as the messenger of Death, the answer to her prayer. He returns her embrace and she is consoled, her grief is assuaged and she is metamorphosed. She and Bacchus ascend to Heaven together. The last word is with Zerbinetta, for whom "each new lover comes like a God."

The opera was sung in the original version and in German. Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* had been adapted into English by Miles Malleison, who played Monsieur Jourdain, making him in every sense a perfect host. He was supported by an acting company of over a score, in which April Cantelo as the Singer, and Peter Copley as the Fencing Master were outstanding. These introductory scenes were so diverting that the audience, ever in a state of expectation for the opera to come, could feel no impatience but only happy excitement in the flowing moments. When one of the best and best-known comedies in the world is used as a ramp leading up to a short opera, that opera must needs be superlative and superlative *Ariadne* seemed, and superlatively well performed. Hilde Zadek gave Ariadne a glorious full warm voice and Ilse Hollweg as Zerbinetta soared to phenomenal heights of song without apparent effort. Bacchus makes a late appearance and his costume was too dingy and shapeless for so splendid an immortal, but Peter Anders has a fine tenor voice and his singing succeeded in overcoming the handicap of this inadequacy. Carl Ebert's production maintained an admirable balance in this many-sided work and Oliver Messel's scenery set it off handsomely. Sir Thomas Beecham, who many years ago introduced this opera to London, conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* was performed in the original Italian of Lorenzo da Ponte. Under Carl Ebert's expert direction, it could not fail to give satisfaction, but it had not the superb completeness of *Ariadne*. George London was rather a heavy Figaro but he sang with forthright power and drew much applause for the first curtain. Cherubino was exceptionally well acted and sung by Sena Jurinac. The song to the Countess in the second act was much applauded, deservedly. Marko Rothmüller's Count was sound and reliable rather than distinguished

and the Countess of Clara Ebers was a gracious personage but not vocally very assertive. Susanna had animation rather than vivacity. Elfride Troetschel played the part effectively but in a rather different character, matching well enough with Figaro. Jean Watson supplied very good comedy in the part of Marcellina, as did Murray Dickie as Basilio. The decor by Rolf Gerard was uninspiring, the scenery being remarkable for that symmetry which cripples imagination. The Great Hall in the Palazzo fell rather short of a Corner House, with an aggressive arrangement of white lattice flanked by red hangings and blue beyond. The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra was conducted by Ferenc Fricsay.

There is no play this year comparable to Mr. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party* and one has to realise that Festivals can be held regularly but masterpieces cannot be written to order. The organisers no doubt decided that it was high time to give Scottish authors a "break" and the drama side at the Royal Lyceum Theatre has been taken care of by The Glasgow Citizens' Theatre, who provided two "world premieres"—a description one has learned to dread. It is surprising that no play was found or chosen which reflects more nearly the peculiar conditions of today than these two plays, the first and more important of which, *The Queen's Comedy*, by James Bridie, harks back to Homer for story and to the first World War for comment, whilst the second, *The Atom Doctor*, by Eric Linklater, owes its idea to Ben Jonson and its treatment to the Marx Brothers.

*The Queen's Comedy* is the comedy of Juno, Queen of Heaven, who plots to outwit Jupiter, from whom she is estranged, by the help of Sleep and the magical cestus of Venus. The story is told in the Fourteenth Book of the "Iliad"—not the Thirteenth, as stated in the programme. At this time, Jupiter is favouring Troy and Juno is concerned, or so she says, for Greece. She is presented as exceedingly deceitful in a calculating, feminine way and Sonia Dresdel has a wonderful time with her, giving her much sinuous and deceptive charm and purring with self-content. Even chuckle-headed Jove should have been on his guard. Perhaps he never thought she would dare. He relied very much on his majesty being taken for granted. Walter Fitzgerald was a wonderfully easy-going Jove, impressive in whiskers and a voluminous dressing-gown, a good fellow if ever there was one, a bon viveur, the First Gentleman of Olympus. Duncan Macrae played Vulcan with a limp, a leather apron, a blue print and a Glasgow accent. All the other deities were mere glittering socialites, with the narrow views and limited interests of a highly exalted and closely restricted Court circle. Forbidden by Jupiter to intervene in the Trojan War, they seemed rather at a loose end.

(Continued on page 27)



Angus McBean

LAVERNE BURDEN as Julia Jordan and STEPHEN DOUGLASS  
as Billy Bigelow.

## “*Carousel*” AT DRURY LANE

THE successor to *Oklahoma!* at Drury Lane has given London another delightful example of the modern American musical. The haunting music of Richard Rodgers, which interprets so perfectly Oscar Hammerstein 2nd's book and lyrics, together with Agnes de Mille's now-famous choreography, provide an entertainment of rich value which should delight audiences at Drury Lane for a long time to come. Rouben Mamoulian is the expert producer and the costumes designed by Miles White have the same Edwardian charm that delighted in that other world-famous Rodgers-Hammerstein musical, *Carousel's* London predecessor.





The play covers the years 1873 to 1888 and the top picture shows a scene in an amusement park on the New England coast, in which Billy Bigelow is a fairground Barker on Mrs. Mullin's carousel (roundabout), which is in the background. Billy is seen, centre, flirting with one of the girls (Mavis Ray) to the annoyance of her sailor escort. In the picture above, at Nettie Fowler's Spa on the ocean front, Nettie Fowler (Marion Ross—right centre) and the chorus are singing one of the big hits of the show, "June is Bustin' Out All Over."

Having been dismissed by Mrs. Mullin, Billy has run away from the fairground with Julie Jordan, the little girl from the mill, and they go to Nettie Fowler's. Mrs. Mullin (Marjorie Mars) tries to persuade him with money to return to her, but Billy, who is very proud of the fact that he is going to be a father, is not to be tempted.

PICTURES BY

PHOTOCRAFT OF KINGSTON



*Below:* The villainous Jigger Craigin (Morgan Davies) tells Billy of a chance of making easy money and finds Billy, who is out of work and penniless, a ready listener. Meantime the sailors, who are constant visitors to Nettie Fowler's, sing of the delights of whaling.







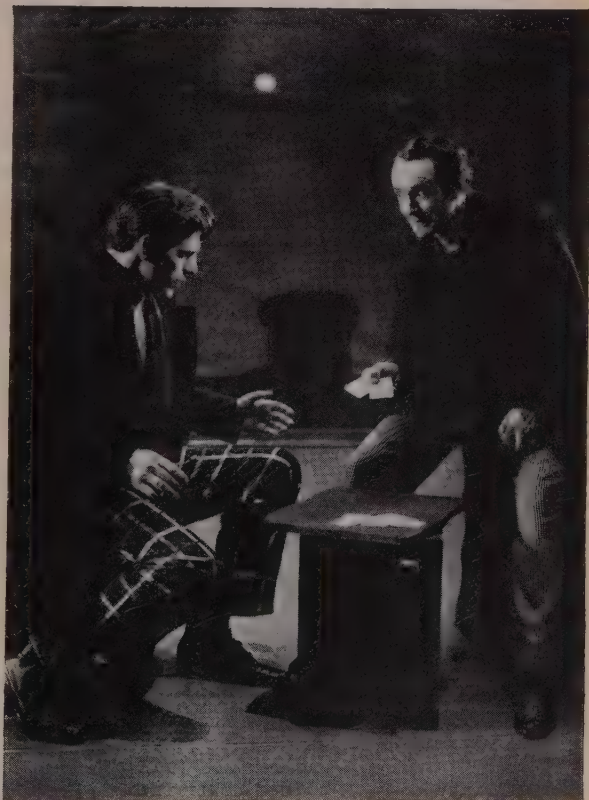
Two further delightful scenes at Nettie Fowler's Spa. *Above*: Nettie brings doughnuts to appease the hunger of the sailors who have been digging for clams since dawn, and (*bottom picture*) the sailors sing a sea shanty, "Blow High, Blow Low," one of the most stirring items of the piece, as is also the astonishing hornpipe dance which follows, which is led by Jane Evans and Robert Pagent.





The scene on the island across the bay where the girls and boys have gone for a picnic, during which they sing "This Was a Real Nice Clam Bake." In the picture above Enoch Snow (Eric Mattson) upbraids Carrie Pipperidge (Margot Moser), to whom he is engaged, for flirting with Jigger Craigin.

*Right:* During the picnic Billy and Jigger creep away and go back to the mainland waterfront, where they have planned to hold up a local rich man for his money. While waiting for mill-owner Bascombe to come along, Billy and his evil genius, Craigin, play cards and as a result Jigger wins even the money that Billy is likely to get as a result of the robbery.





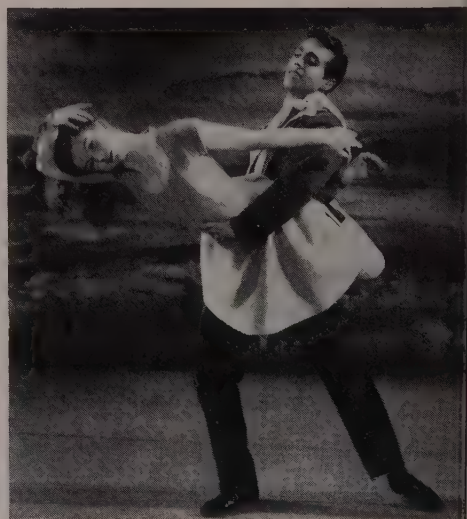


The attempted robbery fails. Mr. Bascombe (W. Thorpe Devereaux) is armed and in the ensuing scuffle Billy is shot dead.



Angus McBean

Julie mourns her dead husband. In the scenes that follow Billy is seen in the precincts of Heaven and is given the chance to return to earth for one day. By now it is some 15 years later and he is able to help his unhappy daughter to find contentment.



Bambi Linn, the dancer, plays the part of Billy's daughter, Louise, and in the picture above she is seen with Robert Paget in the brilliant ballet in Act 2, before the spirit of her father returns to earth and sees her for the first time outside Julie's cottage.

### The 1950 Edinburgh Festival (Continued)

On a lower level, the covered-over orchestra-pit to be exact, the Greeks in battle-soiled khaki uniforms discussed the War in English or Scots according to their station; Agamemnon rather taciturn, very dignified; Ulysses, whose part seemed too small to support his name; and, one of the play's best features, Nestor, a chattering, empty-headed, old die-hard of the family of Blimp, played with a masterly touch by Laurence Hardy, one of the company's best actors. The original Nestor was esteemed for sagacious counsel. This one, being a vacillating old noodle, is much more entertaining.

On a yet lower level, officially, Dorothy Primrose was effectively naturalistic as a Nurse at a dressing-station, and rose most competently to the more imaginative and altogether stronger stresses of the final scene. On the lowest level of all, another member of the Glasgow team shone brilliantly. Roddy Macmillan, as a medical orderly to whom Juno has appeared in a vision, gave a memorable performance. He was well supported by Eric Woodburn as the sympathetic but dubious infantryman to whom the dream is related. Their scene together almost stopped the show.

The tide of battle is flowing against the Greeks. The soldiers bleed and die. Even dead, they are available to amuse an idle deity. Four shades passing over are netted for sport. One is the orderly, rankling after being double-crossed by Juno, who had told him in his vision that all would be well. The Orderly tells his social and spiritual superiors some unpleasant truths. He gives them a piece of his mind. They are uncomfortable and attempt to silence him by asserting their immortality. With nothing to lose and inspired by bitter rage, he leaps on to the couch of Jove and shouts his disgust and defiance from that unique elevation. Silently, with stately tread, the Old 'Un enters behind. The Orderly descends and cowers. All is hushed and still. Slowly and quietly and with more sympathy than Hardy's unweeting God, Jove tells of his own early life in a humble home playing with chaos. Man, the result of idle play, was no special invention. No hope is offered; no indication of where we go from here; nothing so foolish as prophecy. So, on a rather low beat of interest, the curtain descended. Applause, after the audience had pulled itself out of the speculative mood induced by the final scene, was cordial and prolonged, but the call for "Author" came late. Mr. Bridie responded from the stalls with the clear but cryptic declaration, "We are your humble servants and your honoured guests."

The play was faultlessly directed by Tyrone Guthrie and John Casson and the setting was designed and executed by Molly MacEwen.

There were those who opined that *The Atom Doctor*, a farce by Eric Linklater, was not worth a place in the Festival. At two points the characters pretend to a serious streak which only serves to spoil the fun. The end of an association and love "beyond belief" can neither, even among crooks, be accepted as funny. The play comes to a stop with the second act and the third act is unable to revive the interest and declines into mechanical buffoonery. Tyrone Guthrie had gone to great lengths to keep the pot boiling and his production raised in the first Act expectation that could not be fulfilled.

The situation is the same as that of Ben Jonson's play, *The Alchemist*, but Ben made more of it. A manservant, left in charge of a house during the absence of the owner, allows a detrimental reprobate to use the premises and pose as a man of unique gifts and great scientific knowledge. So far does it imitate *The Alchemist* that the charlatan pretends to transmute base metals into gold. Jonson had the return of the owner to end his play, and in bringing the owner back before the end Mr. Linklater has let the bottom out of his.

Morally, there is little to choose between the Atom Doctor, Mortimer, his female accomplice, Connie May, and the deceitful manservant, Shurie, and a false note is struck when the two latter decline to have any more to do with Mortimer because he is not a man of his word. The jealous love of Mortimer for Connie May was made much of early on but nothing came of it.

As the unscrupulous Atom Doctor, Duncan Macrae had an amusing eloquence of voice and gesture. Patricia Burke was all things to all men, but only one thing to all women in a performance of some virtuosity as his female accomplice. James Gibson, as the peccant caretaker, was canny and cagey. As the impoverished Duke of Applecross, Laurence Hardy again shone refulgent. Reception was cordial, but this is hardly the way to found a National Theatre for Scotland.

The Assembly Hall of the Church of Scotland, last year the scene of Sir David Lindsay's attack on the Pre-Reformation Church in *The Three Estates*, this year houses Ben Jonson's attack on the Puritans in *Bartholomew Fair*, presented by the Old Vic Company. In Pepys' summary judgment the play was not rated high and it is not surprising that it has not been publicly performed for 220 years. There is no complete characterisation but, as is usual with Jonson, all are personified humours. They come to life whenever they say anything we can understand and are theatrically effective but very repetitive. George Devine's open-stage production displayed a long line of booths but, as the play does not provide much

(Continued on page 32)



# The Third Mrs Tanqueray

BY ERIC JOHNS

**I**n theatrical history Eileen Herlie will take her place as the third Paula Tanqueray. Mrs. Patrick Campbell was the first, when she created Pinero's heroine at the St. James's in 1893, and Gladys Cooper the second, at the Playhouse in 1922. As far as the West End is concerned, Eileen Herlie is next in line, enjoying the appreciation of discriminating playgoers in the current revival of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, enacted amid the glowing beauty of Cecil Beaton's decor, at the Haymarket.

Miss Herlie needed courage to present herself as Mrs. Tanqueray in London, where a few hoary playgoers still recall the flaunting fascination of the young Mrs. Pat and many,



EILEEN HERLIE as Paula Tanqueray

(Portrait by Cecil Beaton)

with rather more reliable memories, speak of the aura created by Miss Cooper. Far too much nonsense has been written about Miss Herlie being too young for the part. This highly accomplished actress is thirty, just two years older than Mrs. Pat when she played the part for the first time. Furthermore, Miss Herlie is already playing it for the second time in her career.

"One is never old enough to give the performance one would like to give," sighed Miss Herlie, "because one always wants to be a little more experienced. If on that

account an actress postpones the playing of the great roles year after year, she will soon find her career coming to an end without having tackled any of them. Sooner or later she must make a stand and face the consequences.

"Being passionately fond of what I call 'theatrical theatre' I have always wanted to play Paula Tanqueray. Peter Glenville produced the play when the Old Vic Company were at the Liverpool Playhouse during the 1944-45 season, and though he considered me, at the age of 24, rather immature for the part, he thought no harm could be done, as, in any case, most of the other members of the company were young people. My interpretation naturally had its shortcomings, but our presentation of the play possessed sufficient magnetism to fill the theatre for the month's run. Two years later when playing the Queen in *The Eagle Has Two Heads* at the Haymarket, Ivor Novello came to my dressing room one night and implored me to play Paula again as soon as possible.

"Four years elapsed before Murray Macdonald directed the current Haymarket production, enabling me to realise my ambition of playing Paula in the West End under ideal conditions, with a magnificent cast and in a sumptuous setting. At our first reading we had to decide how Pinero's play should be presented to modern playgoers. After much discussion we decided to avoid any attempt at the grand manner, which would only make the play seem unnecessarily dated. It is only 57 years old and consequently not old enough to be treated as the established classic it is bound to become in time.

"We set out to give the play a simple reality and thus make it convincing to present day audiences. Though on reading the play the dialogue strikes one as a trifle stilted, we tried, in performance, to make it sound as natural as every-day speech. The audience gets the feeling of the situation without stopping to pause and analyse the lines, word by word.

"The task of playing Paula in London was all the more formidable in view of the fact that I had to follow the footsteps of two such great actresses as Mrs. Patrick Campbell and Gladys Cooper. All the same, I do not believe that an artist should avoid playing a worth while part because a famous predecessor happens to have triumphed in it. In that case Dame Sybil Thorndike would not have played Lady Randolph in *Douglas* at the Edinburgh Festival this year, because both Peg Woffington and Mrs. Siddons gave such memorable performances as the woeful heroine. Under such conditions most of these

(Continued on page 30)

# Echoes from Broadway

THE recent collapse of the Festival Theatre (the latest attempt to bring repertory to Broadway) and the failure of Garson Kanin's newest comedy, *The Live Wire*, as produced by Michael Todd, seem very much in the past now that New York is furiously buzzing with great fall expectations. Who cares if Ibsen's *Lady From The Sea* was deemed dull and dated; Lynn Riggs' *Borned in Texas* labelled "for small theatre use only," or if no money were left to bring in Strindberg's *Crimes and Crimes*, and Kanin's *The Live Wire*, though well above quota in laughs generated, short circuited itself with a plot and situation deficiency, while everyone is frantically trying to get tickets to the forthcoming Ethel Merman musical, *Call Me Madam*? With the added gilt-edged security of a score by Irving Berlin, book by Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse, direction by George Abbott and choreography by Jerome Robbins, theatre-goers (the word should really be changed to "hitgoers," for that is what the American audience is today) are taking no chances in running into another *South Pacific* ticket shortage. Although that biggest of all hits in the history of the American theatre opened with an advance sale of half a million dollars, the show snowballed to such proportions that the wait for tickets became almost interminable for those not willing to pay the outrageous prices asked for a pair under the counter, and even now with Ezio Pinza singing his love songs to Lana Turner on the Metro Goldwyn Mayer lot instead of to Mary Martin, *South Pacific* has yet to play to an empty seat. Such being the case, an \$800,000 advance for *Call Me Madam*? is anticipated before the curtain rises in New York some time in October, and after that event is taken care of, those capable of thinking astronomically will start trying to figure out how much gold Gertrude Lawrence in Rodgers' and Hammerstein's musical version of *Anna and the King of Siam* will lure before it opens after the first of the year.

On the more immediate horizon, Celeste Holm who, after Ado Annie in *Oklahoma!* and the lead in *Bloomer Girl*, did so well in Hollywood, is returning this month as the star of a new comedy, *Affairs of State* by Louis Verneuil. A thoroughly trained stage actress, everyone knows Miss Holm is capable of scoring a personal success, but more concern is expressed over Olivia de Havilland's pending Broadway debut as

Juliet, no less. Two time winner of the Academy Award, her only stage appearance has been in summer stock as Maggie Wylie in Barrie's *What Every Woman Knows*, so when she stated her terms of \$3,000 per week against 15 per cent. of the gross plus 25 per cent. of the profits, four managers turned the project down before Dwight Deere Wiman came to an agreement with her, and so *Romeo and Juliet* will go into rehearsal under Peter Glenville's direction after he finishes putting *The Curious Savage* by John Patrick (author of *The Hasty Heart*) through its paces for the Theatre Guild, and Mr. Wiman launches Clifford Odets' new drama, *The Country Girl*.

Besides *Affairs of State*, the month of September will be ushering in a comedy entitled *Southern Exposure*, which was successfully tried out in Margo Jones' theatre-in-the-round in Dallas, Texas; Flora Robson in *Black Chiffon*, and Edith Evans and Cecil Parker in *Daphne Laureola*. Returning European visitors have spread the good word about *Daphne Laureola* and New York is comfortably conditioned to "love" Dame Edith in what they are told is a "delightful comedy," but Flora Robson is expected to have a tougher time of it, not personally, for her performance has been highly praised by all who have seen it, but her play has been spoken of by many as a dubious bet for Broadway. (Last minute report: The trade paper *Variety* in reviewing the Boston try-out of *Black Chiffon* reports the script holds from beginning to end; Miss Robson gives her best performance to date, and the play can't miss in New York.)

Of the other British importations due to arrive this year, the greatest interest is focused on Christopher Fry's *The Lady's Not For Burning*, which has already sparked off some heated controversies. The sides are about even, the "ayes" saying it will be an enormous success and the "nays" giving it a little better chance than *A Phoenix Too Frequent* principally because of the presence of John Gielgud and Pamela Brown in the cast. Mr. Fry's adaptation of John Anouilh's *L'Invitation Au Chateau*, *Ring Round The Moon*, should also provide one of the more stimulating evenings with Gilbert Miller directing his own production and entirely new scenery being designed for Americans. This seems a deliberate tempting of the fates for Peter Brook's direction

(Continued on next page)

BY OUR AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT E. MAWBY GREEN



## Echoes from Broadway (Contd.)

and Oliver Messel's decor and costumes for the West End production are said to have contributed enormously to the comedy's brilliant success there. But whatever happens, it will be nice to welcome Lucille Watson back to the stage as Mme. Desmortes, the role created by Margaret Rutherford.

A goodly representation of the best American playwrights should also make this a worthier season than last. Tennessee Williams has just finished the third draft of his new play, *The Rose Tattoo*, and has rushed out to Hollywood to discuss it with Elia Kazan, currently directing the movie version of *Streetcar*. Mr. Kazan had read one of the earlier versions and announced that pressing previous commitments made him unavailable for *The Rose Tattoo*. Immediately eyebrows were raised and Broadway wanted to know, "What's wrong with the new Tennessee Williams play?" So, if after Mr. Williams' Hollywood visit, Mr. Kazan still has previous commitments, wise Broadway will have *The Rose Tattoo* directed before it even opens.

The attitude of the New York critics after the last three Ibsen productions New York has seen, *Ghosts*, *Hedda Gabler* and *Lady From The Sea*, has been that the great Norwegian playwright has served his purpose, seen his day, and should be allowed to accumulate dust on the library shelf. Two playwrights, however, feel differently, saying there is nothing wrong with Ibsen that a new translation and adaptation won't cure, so Arthur Miller, author of *Death of a Salesman*, is doing a new version of *An Enemy of the People* which will co-star Fredric March and Florence Eldridge, and Samuel Taylor, author of the current and popular comedy, *The Happy Time*, is at work on *The Wild Duck*.

Among the old guard playwrights, new works will be forthcoming from Maxwell Anderson, Robert Sherwood and Elmer Rice. A less frequent, but most important contributor to the theatre, Thornton Wilder, has promised to deliver his new play, *The Emporium*, to Jed Harris, and John Steinbeck's *Burning Bright* is already in rehearsal under the Rodgers and Hammerstein banner.

As for America's leading actors and actresses, most of them are still reading and hoping. Helen Hayes has just ended her

disappointing engagement in Joshua Logan's *The Wisteria Trees*; Katharine Cornell has nothing scheduled; Maurice Evans is touring in Shaw's *The Devil's Disciple*; Tallulah Bankhead is toying with two plays, and Judith Anderson may come east to appear in *The Tower Beyond Tragedy* by poet Robinson Jeffers, author of her greatest success, *Medea*. *The Tower Beyond Tragedy* is based on the Agamemnon murder and Miss Anderson appeared in a tryout performance on the West Coast way back in 1941. Nine years later, and apparently audiences have been prepared to accept it.

## The Third Mrs Tanqueray (Contd.)

great roles would die with the players who created them, as no successors would have the courage to revive them.

"I purposely avoided reading accounts of Mrs. Pat's interpretation of Paula Tanqueray, fearing I might be tempted to try and incorporate certain details into my own performance. Nothing could be more dangerous. It is better for an actress to present a faulty original performance rather than a poor copy. I could only play Paula my own way, according to my own feelings about the part. I naturally approach the role humbly, in view of its distinguished history, but can do no more than play it to the best of my ability and beg playgoers to accept it.

"Cecil Beaton, who has such deep affection for the Victorian period, has helped the cast by capturing the leisured elegance of the 'nineties in his decor for Aubrey Tanqueray's bachelor chambers and the tapestry room of his country house in Surrey. The dresses which Mr. Beaton designed for Paula so exactly expressed my idea of her character that I found it easier to make the audience understand exactly how I felt about her. Clothes have a tremendous mental effect upon an actress. If I am conscious of looking right in a particular part, I know that I shall be able to make the audience feel as I do about it, even though they may not necessarily agree with my interpretation. Beaton costumes, while being beautiful works of art, never distract the playgoers' attention from the character. They only help towards a fuller understanding of the *dramatis personae*."

*It is hoped to include an illustrated feature of THE THIRD MRS. TANQUERAY in the November issue.*

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# Whispers from the Wings

BY  
LOOKER ON

THREE years ago, Norman Lawrence, singing hero of *Golden City*, the South African gold rush play at the Adephe, set out to sing his way round the world. Though still 6,000 miles from home, he is now pausing in London to make his West End debut, both on the stage and in cabaret.

Norman was born in Seattle on the Pacific side of the United States and at the tender age of five made his first appearance in public as a dancer. From the very beginning he wanted to go on the stage, but the family rather frowned upon the idea, as they were all gifted musicians and hoped young Norman would follow the footsteps of his elders. By the time the boy was sixteen his father read in the newspapers about a famous screen star dying from an over-dose of drugs. Under the impression that all stage people were dope fiends, he refused to permit Norman to consider a career in the theatre.

The boy had a mind of his own and decided to run away from home with nothing more than his modest childhood savings, which amounted to a mere 100 dollars. He purchased a steamboat ticket to California with 85 of his precious dollars and eventually found himself in Hollywood. His first job, that of an usher at the Warner Brothers Theatre in Beverly Hills, lasted no more than a day, as Norman paid far too much attention to the screen and far too little to patrons in search of seats.

He contacted some friends of the family in the film colony and through them secured a series of engagements as a dancer at the Metro Studios. After he had been in Hollywood for about two years a well-known singing teacher heard the boy tackling a song at a party. Being so impressed by the fine quality and carrying power of Norman's baritone voice, he offered to train it. Norman accepted, but studied in secret until he felt confident enough to ask to be put into vocal choruses for further experience.

When he felt able to leave the chorus and face the public as a soloist, he appeared in revue at the Earl Carroll Theatre Restaurant in Hollywood and eventually made his way to Broadway in one of the famous Earl Carroll *Vanities*. Norman soon discovered that something more than a beautiful tone was required in order to make a success in show business. He maintains that it took him three years to learn how to sing a popular tune, with due projection of the right degree of personality.

Deciding that cabaret would teach him more about his job and audience reaction than any other type of engagement, he was lucky enough to appear at the Shoreham Hotel, an exclusive Washington haunt of



NORMAN LAWRENCE

senators and their wives. While there he picked up some useful acting tips by joining a summer stock company in Tammiment, where only a few years previously Danny Kaye had been acting for 20 dollars a month. Jerome Robbins and Carol Channing were members of the company at the same time as Norman.

After captivating New York at the famous Martinique night club, Norman was invited by George Balanchine to dance in the Broadway revival of *The Merry Widow*, which starred Matha Eggerth and Jan Kiepura. He then sang and danced with June Havoc in *Sadie Thompson*, the musical version of Somerset Maugham's *Rain* and later took over the leading rôle in *Follow the Girls*, playing opposite Gertrude Niesen at the Century Theatre in New York.

Even after attaining manhood, Norman could never resist the attraction of world travel, and in order to see the sights of Australia he accepted the rôle of Prince Rudolf in *Marinka*, the musical play inspired by the Mayerling tragedy. He stayed in the Antipodes for 14 months, appearing in

(Continued on next page)



## The 1950 Edinburgh Festival (Continued)

crowd-work, the fair always seemed deserted. There are, however, over thirty named characters and the programme made exciting reading. As one after another well respected actor or actress appeared, one was doubly thankful for their contribution but regretful that it had to be in this play.

Feebler and more antiquated specimens of Jacobean prolixity could not fail to entertain, employing so many notable players. Roger Livesey, as Adam Overdo, a benignly snooping Justice of the Peace, put a cheerful gloss over an undercurrent of pathos. Ursula Jeans made Dame Overdo attractive and interesting as far as possible but had little to do but feign sickness. Dorothy Tutin, somewhat better served by the author as Win-the-Fight Littlewit, hit off the required "humour" with great success. Esmond Knight brought a fine arrogance to Tom Quarulous. William Devlin was a kind of subdued Pistol. Anthony van Bridge was a strangely simple proctor. Nuna Davey gave a strong performance as the pig-woman. Brian Smith, as her tapster, created a most appealing character out of almost nothing. Mark Dignam sustained the satirised Puritan to good effect, singing through his nose as Zeal-of-the-Land Busy. Robert Eddison was very impressive, properly larger than life, as the rich young gull, Bartholomew Cokes, wide-eyed and clamant to be observed and deceived.

Two excellent players seemed to be miscast. Alec Clunes had the part of a testy little old fellow, Humphrey Wasp, a kind of bear-leader to Cokes. Testy he was, but little he could hardly be. The young Cokes must be more than his keeper can cope with, but this Wasp was physically and in every way equal to imposing authority. That so little notice was taken of him made Ben Jonson seem even more arbitrary and implausible than he is. Dorothy Green could not be grotesque if she tried, nor could she be a canting hypocrite. Her Dame Purecraft had beauty and grace and whatever she said won respectful hearing and favourable interpretation. Jonson did not intend this, but it was interesting to note a point that he had covered with a flat-iron so smoothly ignored.

There, was a studious, sincere, reverent, almost prayerful production of *King Lear*

by students of the University of Edinburgh. In so far as imagination played its part, it was held in check by deep respect for Shakespeare's words, only Kent and Edgar venturing to give them sufficient vocal projection. Some members of the cast, notably Edmund and Cordelia, spoke as if they were actually at their prayers, turning everything inwards. The play was produced on an open stage within the Old College on a sound basis of scholarly appreciation by Jack Ronder. Among the more successful characterisations were Lear by Colin Walker, Cornwall by Alastair Davidson, Kent by Roy Smith, Gloucester by Tom Sandeman, and Edgar by Sandy Grant.

\* \* \*

The American National Ballet Theatre's most interesting offering was *Fall River Legend*, in which the affair of Lizzie Borden seems to be rather mimed than danced, but it was beautifully and atmospherically performed. Nora Kaye's work as the Accused was particularly impressive. Choreography was by Agnes de Mille. Reversing the old order, music had been specially composed by Morton Gould.

## The 1951 Festival

Announcements for 1951 Festival have already been made and include Glyndebourne Opera, Sadlers Wells Opera and Sadlers Wells Ballet.

## Whispers from the Wings (Contd.)

two revues before he left. He decided to make his way home through India and Europe and thus encircle the globe on his theatrical wanderings. Before he left Australia he hit upon the bright idea of singing his way home by means of cabaret engagements at world famous hotels in such cosmopolitan cities as Singapore, Colombo and Bombay. When he reached London he was applauded by the smart set at Ciro's and the Bagatelle and within two months was signed up as leading man in *Golden City*. He is so captivated by the idea of appearing and living in London that it looks as if many moons will wax and wane before he attempts to leave us in order to complete the circle of his world tour.

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An informal rehearsal scene in Nairobi's repertory theatre.  
Donovan Maule is seen in the front row.

## Colonial Theatre BY NORMAN FORSTER

**R**E-AFFIRMATION of the truth of the classical tag, that there is "always something new out of Africa" is provided by the establishment in Nairobi, Kenya (the Empire's youngest capital city) of what is almost certainly the smallest professional theatre in Africa and possibly in the world. The theatre is very largely the creation of Donovan and Mollie Maule, both of whom are experienced professional actors. Both come of theatrical stock, both born, as they say, with grease-paint in their veins, and Annabel Maule, at present appearing with Eric Portman in *His Excellency*, is their daughter.

The Donovan Maule Theatre, located almost on the Equator and six thousand feet above sea-level, is the only professional theatre in East Africa, and one of the very few between the Cape and Cairo, its nearest neighbour being in the Union of South Africa, more than a thousand miles away. Until the Maules arrived in Kenya Nairobi playgoers depended for their live shows on the productions which the various local amateur societies put on from time to time. It has been left to Donovan Maule and his wife to put the professional theatre "on the map" in East Africa by providing a permanent repertory theatre with a whole-time all-professional company assisted occasionally by visiting West End stars.

It has been no easy task; rather has it been a pioneering effort in the best and toughest Colonial tradition undertaken by a courageous couple who know the theatre intimately and, with faith in the future of

the East African theatre and with confidence in its possibilities, hazarded their own resources in their determination to build up a live professional theatre on what was, theatrically speaking, virgin soil.

Mr. Donovan Maule himself has had considerable experience as a stage director. During the war he was Supervisor of Productions for the Central Pool of Artistes—"Stars in Battledress"—and served, with the rank of Major, as Director of Drama in the Middle East. On his demobilisation, seeking new worlds to conquer, he went south to Nairobi, with his wife Mollie, to essay the difficult, and expensive experiment, of purveying to Nairobi a steady and varied supply of dramatic fare.

His first effort consisted in putting on plays, *The Chiltern Hundreds*, *Robert's Wife* among them, with an expensively-rented cinema as playhouse. Later he inaugurated a school of dramatic art, using as studio a large disused room above a grocer's shop in one of the main streets of Nairobi. The place had atmosphere, having been used previously by a teacher of juvenile ballet and dancing. For two years the Maules never let-up in their endeavours to find an existing building suitable for conversion into the theatre of their dreams or to obtain a suitable plot of land on which to build the theatre they knew Nairobi some day must have. But buildings of any kind just now in Nairobi, as elsewhere, either to buy or lease, are hard to come by, at almost any price, and, despite the sympathy with their aims sometimes expressed in Governmental high places,

(Continued overleaf)





Left: Donovan Maule and his wife in *Pink String* and *Sealing Wax*.

nothing happened during those difficult two years to enable Donovan and Mollie to get the site they needed. Finally, in desperation, and in order to get something started on practicable lines, Donovan Maule, so to speak, "pawned his socks" and, literally, with his own hands plus the assistance of a tiny but enthusiastic band of willing helpers, set to work to convert the School of Dramatic Art studio into a model repertory theatre. The conversion was achieved at a cost of some £8,000 and the result is a masterpiece of *multum in parvo*; a delightful intimate theatre capable of seating (on comfortable rubber-cushioned *fauteuils*) an audience of seventy-six, with a well-equipped bar in the Lilliputian foyer and the usual facilities common to much larger houses.

## STAGE MAKE-UP

by Yoti Lane

Original features of this new book are the linking of make-up with production and costume so that producers and stage designers will find it most valuable. Also there is a large number of charts giving details of make-up for the complete cast of many well-known plays.

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The amateur builders had their moments, notably when a snake was disturbed in the rafters when the new ceiling was being put in. But it would take more than an experience such as this (not altogether uncommon in Kenya), to discourage an enthusiast of Mr. Maule's calibre.

The Donovan Maule Players and the bijou theatre in which they work constitute a creation that has been built from the ground up, largely by sweat and laughter, admixed with such ingredients as a good-natured willingness to listen to intelligent and reasonable criticism coupled with a readiness on the part of all involved to turn their hands to any job that the creation of a live theatre with professional standards may demand. The venture has been very generously supported by the thousand or so enthusiastic members of the Donovan Maule Theatre Club who represent a very healthy percentage of Nairobi's European population of 12,000, a figure which includes juveniles.

Donovan Maule's policy is to put on 12 plays a year, each having a run of 28 performances. Productions since February this year have included *Jeannie*; *The First Mrs. Fraser*; *Pink String* and *Sealing-wax*; *George and Margaret* and *Miss Mabel*, most of which played to capacity. Later productions, it is planned, will include such successes as *Blithe Spirit*, *Pygmalion* and *Traveller's Joy*. Recently Jasper Maskelyne, with seven assistants and more than two tons of "magic" on the 16 × 16 feet stage, played 36 performances grossing approximately £900. Another interesting development associated with this go-ahead little enterprise has been the holding of debates on various aspects of the Drama. During the run of R. C. Sherriff's *Miss Mabel* a Sunday evening discussion was held of the highly debatable subject, "How far was Miss Mabel justified?—Can a fine motive excuse crime?" the discussion being opened from various points of view by representatives of the Church of England, the Law, the Medical profession and the Police.

On 26th July the Donovan Maule Players opened with what has proved to be their most successful three-and-a-half weeks' season with Christopher Fry's *The Lady's Not For Burning*. Local critics—and Kenya dramatic critics can be most caustically critical!—have agreed that the Donovan Maule Players' production of *The Lady's Not For Burning* is their best yet. Recently, on the occasion of their 30th wedding anniversary, Donovan and Mollie Maule were presented with their portraits in oils, the gift of members of the company. The portraits are the work of Mr. John A. A. Berrie, the well-known portrait painter who is now resident in Kenya.

# Amateur Stage

## Notes and Topics

**D**URING the month of September the Taverners gave performances of *Noah* by Andre Obey in the English text by Arthur Wilmurt at the following public houses: The Round House, Becontree; The King and Queen, Mottingham; The Royal Oak, Erith; The Robin Hood, Dagenham; and also at the Romford Brewery Sports and Social Club. Goldoni's *The Four Bears* was played at The Welcome Inn, Eltham; The Northcote Arms, Southall; The Fishmongers Arms, Wood Green; The Northover, Bromley; and The Railway Hotel, Hornchurch.

\* \* \*

Plays scheduled for production by the Dunlop Dramatic Society at Fort Dunlop during the 1950/51 season include the following: *Bonnet Over the Windmill* (the first production), *Shadow and Substance* and *The Magistrate*. The Society held their opening Society Night on 4th September and will hold a Christmas party on 20th December, their annual dance on 21st February, and Festival Week from 28th May to 2nd June next year, with the annual general meeting on 11th June.

\* \* \*

News comes from the Ashton-on-Mersey Congregational Church Amateur Dramatic Society of their eleventh annual one-act drama festival to be held at the Town Hall, Sale, from 17th to 21st February next year. The adjudicator will be Mr. Rex Walters, examiner of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and lecturer and adjudicator to the British Drama League. Particulars of entry can be obtained from Mr. E. J. F. Palmer, 14 Park Road, Sale. First production of the new season by this society will be *The Paragon* on 7th-11th October inclusive.

\* \* \*

The King's Heath Little Theatre (The Curtain Players) will open their season with a production of Terence Rattigan's *The Winslow Boy* at the Bournville Infants School Hall on 14th October. This play will also be given at the Moseley and Balsall Heath Institute on 14th November. Other plays to be presented during the season are Lonsdale's *On Approval* (11th November); Goldoni's *The Fan* (27th January) and Rattigan's *Playbill* (21st April).

Walthamstow Educational Settlement Drama School are presenting *Kate Kennedy* by Gordon Bottomley as their first production of the season on 19th, 20th and 21st October. This will be followed by *Royal Occasion* in November and *Man and Superman* in January. The Walthamstow Little Theatre Club, which is not attached to any one particular dramatic society, but is intended for all who are interested in the theatre, whether actors, stage personnel or audience, have an interesting autumn list of fixtures—a number of lectures on drama subjects. Many leading actors, producers and designers have already spoken for this live centre, which incidentally has its own miniature stage where experimental work can be carried out.

\* \* \*

The Sheffield and District Amateur Theatre Association announce that their first autumn date is already lined up: a lecture-demonstration on straight and character make-up to be given by Miss Evelyn Davies on 14th October, at the Grand Hotel (two sessions, 3 and 7.30 p.m.). Miss Davies will bring her own "guinea-pigs" so that members of the audience will be assured of their money's-worth! Two vastly important features of amateur theatrical activity that have not so far been covered by their various lectures are "Business Management" and "Society Organisation." It is welcome news, therefore, that Mr. W. Jenkins Gibson is to address SADATA upon business management and society organisation. Mr. Gibson's qualifications to do so are abundantly evident to all who have read "Organising an Amateur Theatrical Society," which he wrote in conjunction with Miss Dorothy Mason of Chesterfield, and which proved a *vade mecum* for all officials of dramatic and operatic groups in the years immediately preceding the Second World War. This most instructive evening will be held during December.

\* \* \*

The Theatre Club, Hornsey, have announced the forthcoming productions for their autumn season: 4-14th October, *Don't Listen Ladies* by Sacha Guitry; 25th October-4th November, *Women Aren't Angels* by Vernon Sylvaine; 15th-25th November,

(Continued overleaf)

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## Amateur Stage (Contd.)

Guilty by Emile Zola, and 6th-16th December, *The Shining Hour* by Keith Winter.

Opening play at the Questors' Theatre, Ealing, on 23rd September was *The Tinsel of Athens* by Lydia Ragosin, a talented new young playwright. The Questors' Theatre is, of course, the Secretary of the Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain and it has been their policy in the past to present as many new plays as possible in a season.

During September the Dartford Arts Council presented for six performances a production by Norman Paine of *Twelfth Night*, in the Central Park Open Air Theatre, Dartford.

Another interesting September event was The Hovenden Players production of Colley Cibber's *Careless Husband*, which was given on the 16th and 17th (twice daily), at 3 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, which is the property of the National Trust.

The London Artists' Theatre Productions presented *Troilus and Cressida* at Toynbee Hall from 19th to 23rd September inclusive.

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Writing in a recent issue of *The Daily Telegraph*, columnist "Peterborough" had some interesting remarks to make about various claims to be the country's oldest amateur dramatic society. He said:

"A strong and successful counter-attack has been made by the Old Stagers of Canterbury to consolidate their claim to be the oldest amateur dramatic society in the country.

"It is true, as I said, that the Manchester Athenaeum Dramatic Club had its centenary in 1947 and the Old Stagers will not celebrate their 100th season until next year. What had been overlooked were the two wars, which mean that next year's 100th season is in fact the 109th year of the Old Stagers' existence.

"They were founded in 1842 by Mr. F. Ponsonby (later Lord Bessborough) and some friends. They performed in unbroken sequence until 1914, resumed in 1919 until 1939 and went into action again in 1946.

"Mr. Nigel de Grey, whose family now carries the main honours, tells me that the Old Stagers possess every playbill from 1842 onwards—and even the letters making arrangements for rehearsals in the Pavilion at Lord's before the first Canterbury Week."

Just received: The interesting Bulletin for Amateur Drama Groups in Middlesex, entitled *Play-Time* (No. 8), edited by Robert G. Newton, and issued by the Middlesex County Drama Committee.

## OTHER PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

*Dr. Angelus*, by James Bridie (Constable & Co. Ltd., 4/- net).

*Food for Thought*, a play for eight women in one act, by Roland Pertwee (English Theatre Guild Ltd., 1/6).

*Surprise Party*, one act play for nine women, by Molly Raynor (English Theatre Guild Ltd., 1/6).

*A Wind on the Heath*, a play in three acts by Ronald Adam (English Theatre Guild, 4/- net).

*The Hard Man*, by Michael J. Murphy (H. R. Carter Publications Ltd., Belfast, 1/9).

*Thomas James Takes a Wife*, by Robert Spence (H. R. Carter Publications Ltd., Belfast, 1/9).

*John o' the Forest* and other plays, by Kylie Tennant (Modern Plays for School Series, Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1/4 net).

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